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THE CONSEQUENCES OF ALGERIAN
PARTITION

Submitted by the
DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

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Concurred in by the
UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

on 24 January 1962. Concurring were The Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State; The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency; the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army; the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (Intelligence), Department of the Navy; the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF; the Director for Intelligence, Joint Staff; and the Director of the National Security Agency. The Atomic Energy Commission Representative to the USIB, and the Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, abstained, the subject being outside of their jurisdiction.

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THE CONSEQUENCES OF ALGERIAN PARTITION

THE PROBLEM

To evaluate the consequences of a partition of Algeria.

SCOPE

This estimate was prepared in response to a special request, to deal with the particular and limited problem given. It does not consider the consequences that would ensue if the entire area of Algeria were to become independent through negotiations.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Partition of Algeria would lead to further conflict between the French and the Moslems and France would still have a heavy military burden. The new Algerian Government would seek military and large-scale economic assistance from both East and West. The Bloc would be anxious to exploit such an inviting situation by providing financial, technical, and military assistance. Conditions for a rapid expansion of Bloc influence in the independent part of a partitioned Algeria would appear extremely favorable. (Paras. 5, 7, 10-12)

2. Partition would almost certainly create serious strains between France and the US. If the US failed to respond rapidly to Moslem requests for assistance, it would almost certainly lose any chance

of countering strong Bloc influence in Algeria. On the other hand, the French would probably regard any substantial US support for the Algerian regime as calling for a basic reconsideration of their foreign policies. France's reaction would be particularly strong in the unlikely event that the US were joined by its other major NATO partners. Although France would hesitate to give up its leverage on the US and to jeopardize its close ties to the Federal Republic of Germany by actually leaving NATO, it is possible that it would renounce its NATO obligations. We believe it more likely, however, that France would not leave the alliance, but would become an even more difficult partner than it is today. (Paras. 17-20)

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DISCUSSION

Introduction

3. In recent months there has been increasing discussion in France on the partition of Algeria. Although no firm plan has as yet been officially advanced, speculation has generally posited a coastal European zone which would include Algiers and its hinterland and would run westward through Oran to the Moroccan border. The depth of this zone might vary considerably, but it would probably extend inland at least one hundred miles so as to encompass most of the principal agricultural areas and the water supplies of the cities. The remainder of Algeria—i.e., the rest of the agricultural land and the least industrially developed areas—would be left to the Moslems.¹ We believe that the French would attempt to keep control over much of the Sahara, although the principal existing oil pipelines would run directly across the territory of the Moslem state.

4. References by de Gaulle to partition have been ambiguous. He has used threats of partition as a means of putting pressure on the Algerian rebels to compromise, and he might do so again. If he actually carried through partition, he would probably do so as a means of gaining time in the desperate hope that the Provisional Algerian Government (PAG) could eventually be led to accept the federation or confederation of the European zone into an independent Algerian State on terms that would be more satisfactory than are now possible. De Gaulle probably feels that, in the event such an agreement could not be made, he would still have the option of maintaining the European zone more or less indefinitely or of eventually abandoning it to the Moslems and repatriating those who chose to leave.

¹ See the enclosed maps for geographical distribution of population, agriculture, and industry in Algeria. An overlay depicting a hypothetical partition and the distribution of these elements in a partitioned Algeria.

5. Our purpose in this paper is not to discuss the difficulties of effecting a partition of Algeria, but to explore the consequences of an actual partition. Although de Gaulle might conceive of such a policy as representing a continuation of the search for a negotiated settlement, a decision to partition Algeria would almost certainly not bring the rebels to terms, but would arouse their bitter opposition to what they would consider an attempt to rob them of the richest part of their country. The policy of partition would be subject to strenuous efforts by the rebels to reverse it by military, political, and subversive means. It cannot be excluded that the rebels might eventually accept incorporation of the European zone into a Federal arrangement. However, we believe it far more likely that partition would lead to indefinite conflict or result in an ultimate French withdrawal from the European zone either by negotiation or by abandonment.

Consequences of Partition for France and Algeria

6. The partition of Algeria would of necessity involve the migrations of hundreds of thousands of people in and out of both zones. This movement, which would have originated in an atmosphere of political tension and racial animosity, would present both the French and the PAG with continuing problems of widespread violence, but would probably not prevent the eventual establishment of public authority in both zones.

7. A European zone would represent an entirely artificial appendage of France, at least during the period of adjustment, substantially dependent on metropolitan France for economic support. Moreover, with the establishment of a European zone hostilities in one form or another would continue between Moslems and Europeans and France would still have a heavy military burden in Algeria. Since more than half the 2-4 million people who would probably end up in such a zone would be Moslem, distrusted by the *colons* and

subject to agitation and propaganda by Algerian nationalists, de Gaulle would be under constant pressure from the Right to protect and sustain the European community. At the same time he would be subject to increasing domestic political dissatisfaction for failing to eliminate France's Algerian problem.

8. The new state of Moslem Algeria created by partition would face grave administrative and economic problems. Its one political force of any consequence, the PAG, has had no experience in running a civilian state and would have to take over authority on short notice with little or no cooperation on the part of the withdrawing French officials. It is possible that the PAG's distrust of the small Algerian Communist Party would decline sufficiently so that a number of Communists, including Europeans, might be utilized in the new state for their badly needed skills. In any event, the new government would be sorely taxed to establish and maintain basic control of the country, to say nothing of providing an efficiently operating administrative apparatus throughout its territory.

9. Even an intact Algeria would have difficulty in staying economically solvent without a continuation of the substantial subsidies and preferential marketing arrangements now provided by the French. A partitioned Moslem state, cut off from most of its traditional external food supplies, burdened with a heavy influx of refugees and with one of the world's highest population growth rates would have staggering economic requirements of great urgency. Moreover, the government of such a state would almost certainly regard continuation of the war against France as the highest priority of the new nation. It would wish to obtain modern equipment for its military establishment as rapidly as possible.

10. While the new Algerian government could conceivably survive unaided on a very low economic level, it would almost certainly ask both East and West for substantial assistance. However, since such a government would not anticipate receiving substantial military aid from the West we believe that it would turn to Arab neighbors and to the Arab states, and particu-

larly Egypt, would be anxious to build up a special position with respect to the Algerian leadership. However, since the resources of the Arab states are inadequate they might offer to serve as intermediaries for the transshipment of Bloc assistance.

11. Despite their need for aid, the PAG leaders are not eager to fall into a state of dependency on the Bloc. However, the disorder engendered by a prolonged partition would increase their need and narrow their maneuverability in this respect. The Bloc for its part would be anxious to exploit such an inviting situation by providing financial, technical, and military assistance. Simultaneously, the Bloc countries would almost certainly provide the new state strong diplomatic and political support.

12. In summary, the conditions for a rapid expansion of Bloc influence in the independent part of a partitioned Algeria, inflamed by anti-French sentiments and under the control of the more extreme leaders of the PAG, appear extremely favorable. A substantial Bloc presence, in a one-party authoritarian regime which would be on a war-footing and in severe economic difficulties, would be likely to produce conditions in which the government would rapidly become stridently anti-Western.

The Consequences of Partition for Morocco and Tunisia

13. Partition of Algeria and the continuing hostility between the new Moslem state and France would perpetuate the serious political difficulties which the Algerian rebellion already poses for the governments of Bourguiba in Tunisia and King Hassan in Morocco. Both fear that the delicate relationships they currently maintain with France—on which they depend for preferential marketing arrangements and other forms of indirect assistance—would be jeopardized by an intensification of Franco-Algerian conflict.

14. Domestically both governments would come under the pressure of radical nationalists in their own countries to grant the Algerians full assistance even to the point of declaring war on France. This pressure would weigh

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more heavily on Morocco than on Tunisia because the European zone would probably approach (if it were not contiguous to) Morocco's eastern border. Bourguiba, known as the principal exponent of Franco-Algerian negotiations, might find himself and his regime under heavy political fire immediately following the failure of negotiations and a French announcement to proceed with partition.

15. At the least the relations of both Morocco and Tunisia with France would become increasingly distant and strained. Both governments would be under strong internal pressure to expel all Frenchmen living in their territories. In the last analysis there would be little either Hassan or Bourguiba could do to avoid entanglement in the Algerian problem or to prevent an increase of Bloc influence in the Maghreb without risking their own overthrow by radical nationalists. Moreover, the two leaders would probably soon find that their presently limited capacity to influence events in Algeria would decline as the PAG actually took over control in the new state.

Partition and the UN

16. Various attempts could be made to involve the UN in the Algerian problem. Many Afro-Asian states would urge the admission of Moslem Algeria to the organization. In addition they might also allege a breakdown of public order necessitating the intervention of a UN force; or call for UN administrative, technical, or economic aid to the Moslem state; or, if the latter was getting the worst of renewed fighting with the French, call for a UN ceasefire resolution; or attempt to secure a resolution calling upon France to desist from partition or to withdraw from the rest of the country. In any or all of these actions the Soviet Bloc might provide its support. France would block the adoption of such measures as it could; would ignore any resolutions not to its interests; would refuse to cooperate with any pro-PAG UN decisions; and would actively resist any intervention. If efforts at intervention were pressed forward after French warnings that they would not be welcome, we be-

lieve France would boycott and possibly even leave the UN.

Consequences of Partition for the US and NATO

17. The partition of Algeria would confront the US—and many of France's other NATO allies—with cruel policy dilemmas. US recognition of the new state would almost certainly create serious strains with France, especially if the French and the Moslems were engaged in open and active hostilities. A far more critical problem would be posed for the US, however, when it was approached by the Moslem state for assistance and possibly for political support against France. If the US failed to respond rapidly to such requests, it would almost certainly lose any chance of countering strong Bloc influence in Algeria. If the US did respond favorably, however, the French would see our action as aiding a Bloc-supported group with which they were at war on NATO-covered territory.

18. The French President has in the past shown little receptivity to US and other outside opinions on how to prevent Algeria from coming under Bloc influence. In the circumstances of continuing Franco-Algerian hostilities he would be likely to feel that the only means left to France by which its influence in North Africa could be restored and the Algerians induced to reopen negotiations would be by opposing any assistance to the Moslem state. Even Soviet aid to the Moslem state would probably not dissuade de Gaulle.

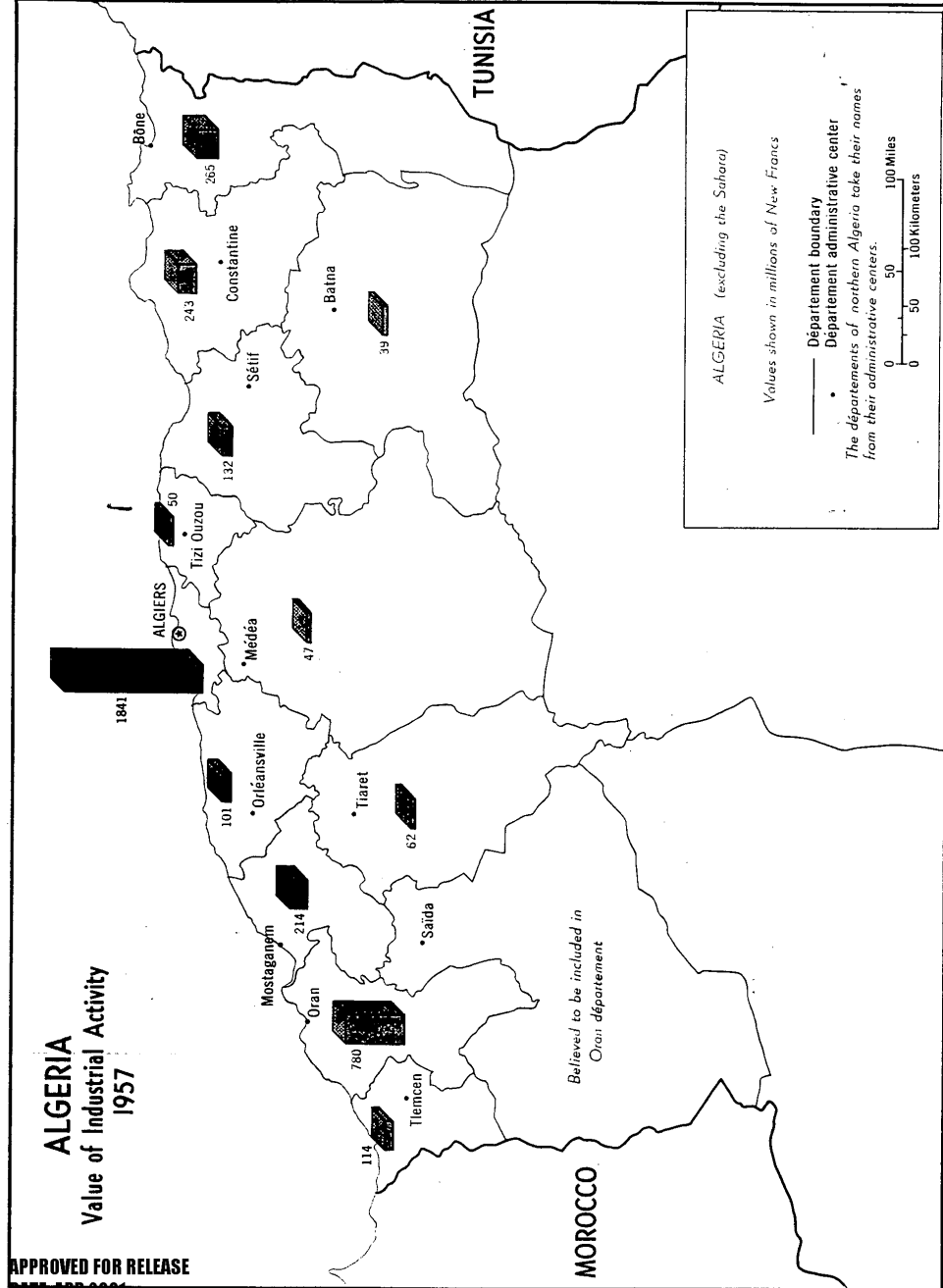
19. All of France's allies would face the same dilemmas as the US, but the French would attach particular importance to the attitudes of the UK, West Germany, and Italy. Most of the NATO countries would probably not risk French hostility by recognizing or otherwise assisting the PAG, even if the US did so. However, their support for France might well dwindle as time passed, and some—notably Italy and Turkey—would find it difficult to resist establishing contacts with the new regime.

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20. The French would probably regard any substantial US assistance to the Algerian regime, especially in the unlikely event that the US were joined by its major NATO partners, as calling for a basic reconsideration of their foreign policies. Although France would hesitate to give up its leverage on the

US and to jeopardize its close ties to the Federal Republic of Germany by actually leaving NATO, it is possible that it would renounce its NATO obligations. We believe it more likely, however, that France would not leave the alliance, but would become an even more difficult partner than it is today.

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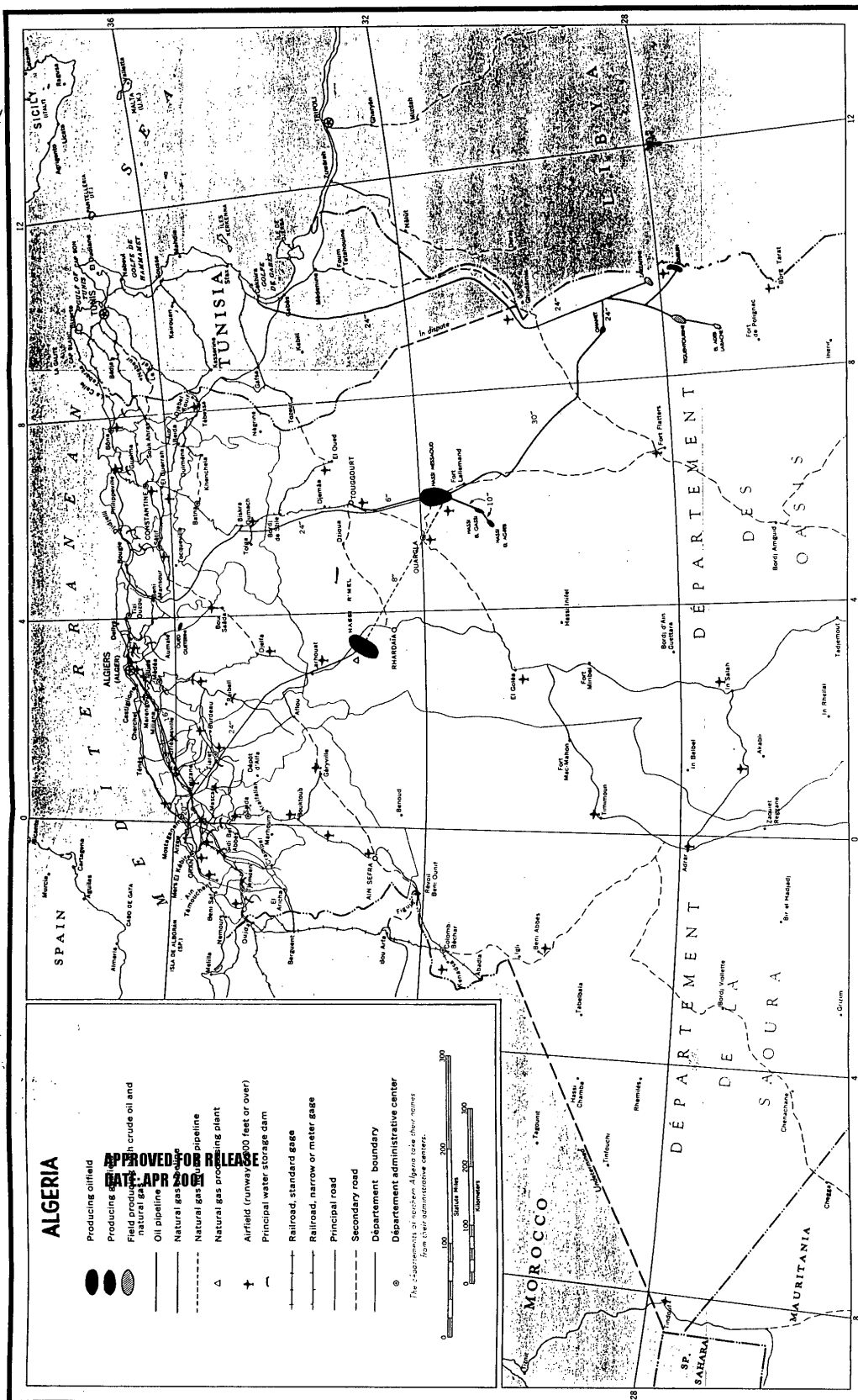
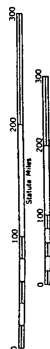
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ALGERIA

- Producing oilfield
- Producing oilfield with crude oil and natural gas
- Oil pipeline
- Natural gas pipeline
- Natural gas producing plant
- Airfield (runway 800 feet or over)
- Principal water storage dam
- Railroad, standard gauge
- Railroad, narrow or meter gauge
- Principal road
- Secondary road
- Département boundary
- Département administrative center

The départements of western Algeria take their names from their administrative centers.



**Hypothetical Plan of a European Zone
in the Transatlantic Area**

This outline for a European zone originally appeared in a popular weekly magazine in the summer of 1951. Although
seriously considered, the plan was not adopted. The
would completely destroy the European zone and certainly would
be the maximum of the zone.

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